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**COERCIVE AIR STRATEGY IN POST-COLD WAR PEACE  
OPERATIONS**

BY  
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## ***Abstract***

This paper analyzes coercive air strategy in Iraq and Bosnia to ascertain lessons and implications for coercive air strategy in twenty-first century peace operations. The analysis focuses on: Operations Provide Comfort/Northern Watch, Southern Watch, Desert Fox, Deny Flight, Deliberate Force, and Allied Force. The analysis and comparison of these operations and the factors affecting them reveal the following attributes of airpower in peace operations: 1) Airpower is highly effective in achieving tactical and operational objectives; 2) Airpower represents the lowest risk force application method; 3) Punishment is the coercive mechanism of airpower; and 4) Airpower technology, training, and experience drive common air tactics and strategy in very different situations. These attributes imply: 1) that the low-risk tactical and operational successes in Iraq and the Balkans will result in a dependence on airpower in future peace operations (Kosovo); 2) that airpower will be applied as punishment for non-compliant behavior in an attempt to convey the futility of further non-compliance; and 3) Air strategies and objectives will be similar to past peace operations regardless of the situation. Nevertheless, as this study will show, airpower can be an effective means of coercion in peace operations, but it cannot mandate compliance. The target of coercion determines the duration of the coercive air campaign. Thus, states employing airpower as the sole means of coercion in future peace operations should acknowledge indefinite commitments or be prepared to fall short of their original objectives.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

*It is indeed tragic that diplomacy has failed, but there are times when the use of force may be legitimate in the pursuit of peace.*

—Kofi Annan

In 1989, Soviet Communism ended, significantly reducing the risk of world war. Since that time, US policy makers have struggled with “how to articulate interests and maintain a moral foundation for policy in the absence of direct threats to US strategic interests.”<sup>1</sup> Enter “peace operations,” the use of the military to support a national policy and strategy for promoting democracy around the globe and according to the 1998 White House National Security Strategy, one the most frequent challenges for US forces in the future.

Smaller-scale contingency operations encompass the full range of military operations short of major theater war, including humanitarian assistance, peace operations, enforcing embargoes and no-fly zones, evacuating US citizens, reinforcing key allies, and limited strikes and intervention. These operations will likely pose the most frequent challenge for US forces and cumulatively require significant commitments over time.

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<sup>1</sup> Mats R. Berdal, quoted by James H. Allen, *Peacekeeping: Outspoken Observations by a Field Officer* (Westport CT: Praeger Press, 1996), 12.

Given the above, the purpose of this study is to examine coercive air strategy in post-Cold War peace operations in an attempt to highlight important characteristics that must be considered by policy makers and military commanders.

But before we can proceed, it is first necessary to provide several definitions in order to establish a common frame of reference.

Peace Operations - Operations conducted to stop fighting and/or prevent its reoccurrence.

Peace operations as defined in Joint Pub 3-07:

Peacekeeping – Military or para-military operations that are undertaken with the consent of all major belligerents, designed to monitor and facilitate implementation of an existing truce and support diplomatic efforts to reach a long-term political settlement.<sup>2</sup>

Peace Enforcement – Application of military force, or the threat of its use, normally pursuant to international authorization, to compel compliance with resolutions or sanctions designed to maintain or restore peace and order.<sup>3</sup>

Coercion - The use of force, either to compel the enemy to stop an action or to deter him starting one. Brute force is the alternative of coercion and is the destruction of an enemy's capability to resist, leaving no alternative other than unconditional surrender. Coercion requires that the enemy make a conscious decision to quit, prior to complete military defeat, while he still has the military means to resist.<sup>4</sup>

Coercive airpower strategies and targets:

Denial - A denial strategy seeks to reduce the enemy's ability to attack and/or defend to a point where further non-compliance is perceived to be

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<sup>2</sup> Joint Pub 3-07.3, Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Peacekeeping Operations (29 Apr 1994), I-1.

<sup>3</sup> Joint Task Force Commander's Handbook for Peace Operations (28 Feb 1995), Ex-1.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1966), 4-5.

futile. The primary targets of a denial strategy are enemy tools of war and their enablers: aircraft, airfields, tanks, artillery, integrated air defense systems, warships, submarines, weapons/fuel storage, command and control nodes etc. and are generally categorized as “counterforce” targets.<sup>5</sup>

Punishment - Punishment strategy seeks to raise the perceived costs of further non-compliance to intolerable levels. A punishment strategy targets entities which are highly valued by the enemy. Targets of punishment strategies will vary from campaign to campaign as dictated by enemy values and are generally, categorized as “countervalue” targets.<sup>6</sup>

Risk - A variation of punishment strategy that involves strikes against countervalue targets followed by a pause for the enemy to consider the future costs of non-compliance. The fear of losing remaining high-value assets coerces the enemy to conform. If necessary, this pattern is repeated until the enemy decides to conform with demands.<sup>7</sup> “For a risk strategy to succeed, there must be enough high value targets left to the enemy for future costs to be coercive.”<sup>8</sup>

Decapitation - Decapitation strategy in its pure form seeks to eliminate enemy leadership, either through assassination or isolation.<sup>9</sup> It is defined by the target set attacked and not the mechanism involved in coercing enemy behavior.<sup>10</sup>

The analysis will examine coercive air strategy in Iraq and in the Balkans since 29 Feb 1991. The analysis will begin with the background and history of each peace operation, then proceed to bi-partisan assumptions, the US grand strategic end-state, and finally factors affecting the air strategies. Consideration of the factors that affect air strategy depicts the boundaries in which the air strategists have operated while

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<sup>5</sup> Robert A. Pape, *Bombing to Win: Airpower and Coercion in War* (Cornell University Press, 1996), 15-19.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 13-18.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1966), 166-168.

<sup>8</sup> Scott Walker, “A Unified Theory of Coercive Airpower,” *Airpower Journal* (Summer 1997): 74.

<sup>9</sup> John A. Warden, “The Enemy as a System,” *Airpower Journal* (Spring 1995): 40-55.

<sup>10</sup> Scott Walker, “A Unified Theory of Coercive Airpower,” *Airpower Journal* (Summer 1997): 74.

developing the air strategies under examination. Certain restraints, limitations, and/or mandates may be revealed thus illuminating further analysis. The factors affecting air strategy that will be considered are:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Objectives</li><li>• Nature of conflict</li><li>• Legitimacy</li><li>• Political restraints.....</li><li>• Domestic restraints</li><li>• Terrain/Weather</li><li>• Intelligence</li><li>• Feedback/measurement</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enemy valuables</li><li>• Enemy vulnerabilities</li><li>• Targets</li><li>• Threats</li><li>• Time</li><li>• Costs</li></ul> |
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Following this analysis, the coercive air strategies will be broken down into targets, desired effects, objectives, and results to identify the coercive mechanism brought to bear through the application of airpower. Comparisons will be made to identify and synthesize the similarities and differences between these coercive air strategies to highlight implications for future decision-makers.

There are numerous limitations to this study. It relies on incomplete information and the reader must remember that both peace operations are currently ongoing. As a result, enemy assessments, the damage to his system, and the actions and reactions of Iraqi and Balkan decision-makers remain unclear. Moreover, the findings presented here are only assertions based upon unclassified sources and reason<sup>11</sup>

In the end, the purpose of this paper is to highlight important characteristics of successful air strategies in peace operations to help future decision-makers develop useful air strategies to coerce desired behavior in peace operations. The findings are not meant to be considered the sole considerations regarding air operations in peace operations.

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<sup>11</sup> “Operations and Effects and Effectiveness,” *Gulf War Airpower Survey*, Vol. 2 (Washington, DC 1993), 2:10.

Further, the intent is not to merely detail the pro's and con's of modern peace operations in US foreign policy or attempt to suggest that airpower should be used independently of ground or naval forces in future peace operations. Rather, this study seeks to provide strategists with insight into the application of airpower in modern peace operations.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Coercive Air Strategy in Iraqi**

*We must make it clear that reckless acts have consequences, or those acts will increase. We must reduce Iraq's ability to strike out at its neighbors and we must increase America's ability to contain Iraq over the long run.*

-- President Clinton, 1996

*Let the free men of the world and the sons of the glorious Arab nation be assured for the safety of Iraq, country of glory, dignity and pride. Iraq is steadfast like the high masts and no wind will shake and a snake's hiss shall not tear. . . Resist them and teach them a new lesson in the meanings which their humiliating and lowly souls do not carry.*

-- Saddam Hussein, 1996

Following the allied military victory in Desert Storm, the US joined the UN in an effort to promote peace in Southwest Asia (SWA).<sup>12</sup> Eight years later, the US-led and the UN-sponsored coalition efforts have failed to force Iraq to comply with UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR). Necessarily, one must ask, why? In this chapter, we will analyze the air strategy of post-Desert Storm SWA peace operations, highlighting the factors affecting the air strategy and addressing the implications of this analysis. To do so, we will examine the background, desired end-state, the coercive air strategy, and the results in order to answer the following questions: 1) what are the primary mechanisms

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<sup>12</sup> "The United Nations and the Iraq-Kuwait Conflict 199096," (UN Dept. of Public Information, 1996): 121.

of coercion involved in the air strategy; 2) can airpower force Iraq to comply with UN resolutions; and 3) what if any are the implications of this analysis?

**Figure 1: Historical Summary of Peace Operations in Iraq**

	<u>1991</u>
Feb 28 - 4 Mar:	Persian Gulf War ends, Iraq accepts allied terms; civil unrest in Iraq spreads, Shiites in south and Kurds in the North; Iraqi army crushes revolt.
July:	UN weapons inspectors reveal four times the WMD as reported.
Sep:	Iraq detains then releases UN inspectors.
	<u>1992</u>
Feb:	UN condemns Iraq for refusing to allow destruction of WMD.
Aug:	Operation Southern Watch (OSW) begins establishing a southern "no-fly" zone excluding Iraqi military aircraft.
Dec:	Shootdown of Iraqi aircraft violating exclusion zone.
	<u>1993</u>
Jan:	Allied TLAM attack of missile sites and nuclear facility near Baghdad.
Apr:	Arrests made for alleged Bush assassination plot.
Jun:	US launches 24 TLAM's at Iraqi Intelligence headquarters in response to Bush assassination plot.
	<u>1994</u>
Oct:	Iraqi troops move toward Kuwait, troops withdrawal in the face of US military deployment.
	<u>1995</u>
Jan:	UN report reveals Iraqi plan for biological weapons program in the 1980's.
Sep:	Operation Vigilant Sentinel begins; more US troops and USS Lincoln extends in the Persian Gulf.
	<u>1996</u>
Aug 31:	Iraqi troops, tanks, and helicopters capture a Kurdish city in US protected area.
Sep 2:	Air strikes against military and command/control targets in southern Iraq, Iraqi forces withdrawal from Kurdish areas in the North; southern no-fly zone is extended north to Baghdad.
Nov:	Iraq announces full agreement with UN "oil for food" deal.
	<u>1997</u>
Jun:	Russia and the US consider tougher sanctions against Iraq.
Oct:	Iraq refuses to comply with inspection mandates; UN threatens trade ban.
Nov 13:	Iraq tells US inspectors they must leave Iraq.
Nov 14:	USS George Washington is deployed to Persian Gulf.
Nov 20:	Russia convinces Iraq to allow US inspectors to resume inspections.
Dec:	Iraq refuses to allow inspections of numerous "presidential" sites.
	<u>1998</u>
Jan:	Iraq blocks UN inspection team led by an American.
Feb:	US threatens air strikes; Saddam agrees to allowing inspectors for consideration of lifting of the sanctions against Iraq.
May:	US begins force draw down in theater.
Aug:	Iraq announces the "end" of inspections.
Oct 31:	Iraq ends inspections.
Nov 11:	US deploys forces and threatens air strikes.
Nov 12:	Tariq Aziz insists Iraq will not back down.
Nov 14:	US cancels air strikes when Iraq agrees to allow UN inspectors free access to sites and documents.
Dec 15:	Chief UN inspector reports Iraq has failed to meet previous promises and has imposed new restrictions on UN inspections.
Dec 16:	Operation Desert Fox begins.

*Source:* Timeline composed from the following sources: "Chronology of Events Leading to the US-Led Attack on Iraq," *US State Department*, 8 Jan 1999, n.p.; on line, Internet, 31 Mar 1999, available from [www.state.gov/www/regions/nea](http://www.state.gov/www/regions/nea). "Chronology of Key Events of Gulf War and Aftermath," 4 Dec 1998, n.p.; on line, Internet, 31 Mar 1999, available from <http://www.globaldialog.com/~kornkev/Chrono.htm>. "Iraq Relations Since End of Gulf War," *Air Force Times* (28 December 1998): 4.

## **Background**

Following Desert Storm, the UN pressured Iraqi to uphold the cease fire agreements as dictated in UN resolution 686. At the same time, the UN Coalition continued sanctions dictated before the war to ensure Iraq destroyed its weapons of mass destruction (WMD). UN resolution 687 was passed on 3 April 1991 in response to Iraqi non-cooperation over outstanding WMD issues.<sup>13</sup> Specifically, under the auspices of UN resolution 687, “Iraq was required to present the UN a full disclosure of all its chemical and biological weapons facilities, stocks of long-range ballistic missiles, and nuclear materials, besides cooperating with the destruction of these assets.”<sup>14</sup>

Shortly after the war, the Shi’ite population of southern Iraq and the Kurdish population to the north rebelled against the rule of the Sunni-dominated government of Saddam Hussein. The Iraqi government violently suppressed these rebellions. To condemn Saddam’s ruthless violence against minorities the UN passed resolution 688 on 5 April 1991. This resolution prohibited continued Iraqi oppression and the use of force against minority populations in Iraq.<sup>15</sup> US aircraft were designated as part of the UN force organized to enforce UN resolutions 686-688 and since that time have been involved in continuous intelligence gathering, surveillance, reconnaissance (ISR), and combat missions designed to force Iraqi compliance with the UN resolutions.

Overall, the US became involved in Iraqi peace operations as a result of incomplete coalition conflict resolution. The negotiated settlement did not establish the conditions necessary to conduct adequate follow-through operations ensuring the safety of the Iraqi

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<sup>13</sup> “History of the Joint Task Force-Southwest Asia,” Vol. 1 *Narrative* (Jan 1994), 1-2.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 1-2.

population and the elimination Iraqi WMD.<sup>16</sup> The US remains interested because it was the principal player in the Gulf War and had the highest stakes in mandating satisfactory post-conflict requirements. Additionally, the US was/is the only state with the comprehensive means to enforce the UN resolutions.

Current US involvement is directed at the enforcement of the UN resolutions in order to: 1) uphold the cease fire agreement (686); 2) facilitate the destruction of all Iraqi WMD and their associated entities (687); and 3) end the armed repression of the Iraqi people (688). But at this late date the US is facing growing opposition.

### **Assumptions**

The US is operating in SWA under the following assumptions: 1) UN and coalition support provides legitimacy and authority in SWA; 2) US operations are casualty-averse and if casualties are incurred, US public support may dwindle or collapse; and 3) there is a limit to the damage that can be inflicted on Iraq, but there is also a threshold of pain beyond which Iraq cannot endure.

Without UN sponsorship and coalition support, the US lacks authority and legitimacy in SWA, and as time passes, garnering worldwide support and holding the semblance of a coalition together grows increasingly difficult. Following Iraq's eviction from Kuwait, Arab nations formerly aligned against Iraq now find it hard to continue to place pressure on their Muslim brothers to enforce sanctions in Iraq. Thus legitimacy for the continuation of peace operations in Iraq hinges upon the support or ambivalence of neighboring Arabic states. Arab lack of resolve could end US activity in the region.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 2.

Diplomatic efforts to ensure Arab support of at least non-interference will be required if US-led peace operations are to continue. Notwithstanding, if US forces incur casualties, US domestic support may evaporate as demonstrated in Somalia in 1993.<sup>17</sup> Finally, if there is a limit to the pain Iraq can endure, the political, international, and domestic restraints of “acceptable” US options may fall short of the Iraqi pain threshold.

In terms of Iraqi assumptions, the primary cause of the protracted nature of ongoing peace operations is Iraqi refusal to comply with UN resolutions concerning the elimination of Iraqi WMD. It stands to reason that the Iraqi government survived the war and therefore assumes it can withstand the worst the US has to offer. Iraq appreciates that the United States dislikes protracted conflict and has therefore settled into a strategy aimed at eroding American will. Iraq also appreciates that the US is limited in terms of the use of force owing to an aversion to casualties (including Iraqi) and the need for international support. The net result is an Iraqi conclusion that the only punishment for non-compliance will be in the form of limited air strikes lasting for short periods of time. In short, Iraq has weathered all the US has offered and assumes it can continue to do so.

### **Desired End State**

To bring peace operations in Iraq to closure, the Iraqi government must comply with UN resolution 687. The first objective, upholding the cease fire agreement (UN resolution 686), has been met. The intent of the third objective, ending the armed repression of the Iraqi people (UN resolution 688), has also been accomplished to the

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<sup>16</sup> Grant T. Hammond, “Myths of the Gulf War: Some Lessons not to Learn,” *Airpower Journal* Vol. 12, no 3 (Fall 1998): 10.

extent that this is no longer the driving force behind continued US involvement. The point of contention remains Iraq's refusal to cooperate with UN efforts to eliminate Iraqi WMD and US adamance that Iraq comply.<sup>18</sup> From the US perspective a politically advantageous and acceptable end state would be the verified destruction of all known WMD and production capabilities which would translate into "regional stability" and US "victory." Having made large investments in the region the US is hesitant to abandon its military presence prior to achieving these objectives. Regional stability achieved through the verified destruction of known Iraqi WMD/production capabilities will establish the US as the political and military victor, a condition necessary for US withdrawal from SWA. Factors affecting the coercive air strategy designed to meet this goal are depicted in figure 2.

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<sup>17</sup> James O. Tubbs, "Beyond Gunboat Diplomacy: Forceful Applications of Airpower in Peace Enforcement Operations," (Maxwell AFB, AL: SAAS Thesis, June 1995), 41.

<sup>18</sup> "The Gulf Affair: Problems of Restoring and Safeguarding Peace," *UN Security Council Resolution 687* (UNIDIR: 3 Apr 91), 51.

**Figure 2: Factors Affecting Air Strategy in Iraq:**

<b>Airpower Objectives:</b> 1) deny flight of Iraqi aircraft inside the designated exclusion zones, 2) reduce Iraqi WMD and their production/storage facilities, 3) raise the costs of non-compliance with UN resolutions to a level resulting in compliance, 4) demonstrate UN/US resolve, and 5) accomplish the first four objectives without the loss of a friendly aircraft.
<b>Nature of the conflict:</b> Inter state, or Iraq verses the United Nations. Conventional, limited for the United States. No ground support or threat of ground action—air only.
<b>Legitimacy:</b> Provided through UN resolutions and coalition support.
<b>Political restraints:</b> Coalition support required.
<b>Domestic restraints:</b> US casualties must be kept at a minimum.
<b>Terrain/Weather:</b> Ideal for airpower.
<b>Intelligence:</b> Available and more reliable with time. Limited in WMD terms.
<b>Enemy valuables:</b> Saddam's life and position at the head of the Iraqi government—highly dependent on the military (Republican Guard).
<b>Enemy position/force type:</b> The Iraqi military forces are concentrated inside set boundaries and is a conventional force using conventional tactics.
<b>Enemy vulnerabilities:</b> Forces are exposed and alone.
<b>Target identification:</b> Limited by intelligence, terrain/weather small factors.
<b>Feedback/Measurement:</b> Limited, true WMD status is unknown without on sight human inspection and analysis.
<b>Threats:</b> High, requires assets and planning to negate.
<b>Time:</b> Determined by Iraq and Saddam.
<b>Costs:</b> Determined by time, higher TDY rate and lower readiness.

These factors shape coercive air strategy, they depict the boundaries in which the air strategists have operated while developing coercive air operations. Certain restraints, limitations, and/or mandates are given in figure 2 and will be compared to the factors affecting Balkan air strategy in chapter 4.

## Iraqi Peace Operations Involving Coercive Airpower

### **Operation Provide Comfort, Operations Southern/Northern Watch:**

Situation - Shortly after Desert Storm the Shi'ite Muslims in southern Iraq and the Kurds in northern Iraq rebelled against the Sunni-dominated government of Saddam Hussein. These rebellions were met by the Iraqi army and air force resulting in the massacre of minority populations.<sup>19</sup>

Objectives - Limit Iraq's aggressive air activities.<sup>20</sup> Leaflets dropped over Iraq on 27 Aug 1992 by Operation Southern Watch forces announced the no-fly zone south of 32 degrees north. The leaflets had a map with of Iraq with the 32<sup>nd</sup> parallel depicted as a line of destruction. The text on the illustration reads "Fly below this line and you won't come back!" The reverse side of the leaflet reads "Attention Iraqi military pilots! Because of Saddam's continued persecution of the Shi'a living in southern Iraq, a direct violation of U.N. resolution 688, a no-fly zone has been imposed south of the 32<sup>nd</sup> parallel. Therefore, any Iraqi military pilot who flies below the 32<sup>nd</sup> parallel will be shot down."<sup>21</sup>

Targets - Iraqi aircraft and helicopters.

Effects - The elimination of Iraqi attacks against the Shi'a and Kurdish populations.

Mechanism - Primarily denial through the establishment of the no-fly zones making any attempts by Iraqi aircraft or helicopters to violate the protected airspace futile. Denial occurred as punishment for violation of the no-fly zones, hence coercion through denial and punishment.

### **Attack against missile sites and nuclear facilities. The first bombing since the conclusion of the Persian Gulf War. Jan 13, 1993**

Situation - "The attack came in response to Iraqi fighter violations of the southern no-fly zone, deployment of antiaircraft missile batteries in southern and northern US

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<sup>19</sup> "History of the Joint Task Force-Southwest Asia," Vol 1, *Narrative* (January 1994), 2.

<sup>20</sup> "Operation Northern Watch Fact Sheet," 25 Nov 1998, n.p.; on line, Internet, 8 May 1998, available from <http://www.incirlik.af.mil/onw>.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

protected areas, refusal to allow UN inspectors to fly to Iraq in UN planes, and armed incursions to retrieve weapons from territory that the UN has determined belongs to Kuwait.”<sup>22</sup>

Objectives - “Remove the antiaircraft threat to allied planes patrolling the air-exclusion zone in southern Iraq and send a strong political message to Baghdad that it was obliged to abide by the restrictions imposed after the Persian Gulf War.”<sup>23</sup>

Targets - Integrated air defense systems including mobile surface to air missile batteries, ground control intercept command posts, and radar.

Effects - Unknown.

Mechanism - Punishment for non-compliant behavior aimed at counterforce targets reducing Iraq’s ability to protect itself from airpower. Denial by punishment.

### **TLAM attack in response to Bush assassination plot. June 26, 1993**

Situation - Iraq planned to assassinate former President Bush when he visited Kuwait. President Clinton said, “...The Iraqi attack against President Bush was an attack against our country and against all Americans.”<sup>24</sup>

Objectives - To deter assassinations of heads of state.

Targets - The Iraqi intelligence headquarters.

Effects - Physical damage to building. Effects on Iraqi thoughts concerning future assassination possibilities is unknown.

Mechanism - Raise the costs of assassination activities to deter future assassination strategies. Punishment

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<sup>22</sup> Michael R. Gordon, “Bush Said to Plan Air Strike on Iraq Over its Defiance: Attack Seems Near,” *New York Times* (12 Jan 1993): A1.

<sup>23</sup> Michael R. Gordon, “Some Iraqi Missile Sites Damaged, US says, Calling Raid a Success,” *New York Times* (14 Jan 1993): A1.

<sup>24</sup> Gwen Ifill. “Clinton Bluntly Reports ‘Compelling Evidence’ Found Against Iraq,” *New York Times* (27 JUN 1993): A1.

## **Cruise missile attacks against Iraqi air defense forces in southern Iraq.<sup>25</sup> Sept 3-4 1996**

Situation- 30,000 to 40,000 Iraqi troops supported by tanks and artillery invaded Kurdish enclaves in northern Iraq and were executing political opponents. The incursion was the most significant Iraqi military campaign since the Persian Gulf War.

Objectives - “To make Saddam pay a price for the latest act of brutality, reducing his ability to threaten his neighbors and America’s interests.”<sup>26</sup> To protect the safety of U.S. aircraft enforcing the no-fly zone.

Targets - SAM sites, radar batteries, and command and control centers.

Effects - Iraqi forces reportedly pulled out of Kurdish enclave. Unconfirmed damage to SAM sites, radar batteries and command and control centers.

Mechanism - Denial through punishment.

## **Desert Fox**

Situation - Iraq failed to meet previous promises regarding WMD inspections and imposed new restrictions on UN inspections.

Objectives - Degrade Iraqi WMD capability and reduce Iraq’s offensive and defensive military capabilities.

Effects - Possibly delayed Iraqi WMD program one year, reduced Iraq’s ability to defend itself and attack neighbors. UN inspectors permanently banned from Iraq.

Targets - Suspected WMD assets, command/control sites, and IADS.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Steven L.Myers. “Pentagon says Command Site was Struck,” *New York Times* (3 Sep 1996): A1.

<sup>26</sup> “Words of Clinton and Saddam Hussein,” President Clinton’s recorded statement from 3 Sep 1996, *New York Times* (4 Sep 1996): A8.

<sup>27</sup> Linda D. Kozaryn, “Four Nights; 100 Targets,” 98734, 21 Dec 1998, n.p.; on line, Internet, 8 May 1999, available from [http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Dec1998/n12211998\\_9812212.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Dec1998/n12211998_9812212.html). Jim Garamone, “US Strikes Aimed at Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction,” 98728, 17 Dec 1998, n.p.; on line, Internet, 8 May 1999, available from [http://www.dtic.defenselink.mil/news/Dec1998/n12171998\\_9812172.html](http://www.dtic.defenselink.mil/news/Dec1998/n12171998_9812172.html). William Cohen and General Zinni in DoD news briefing, 21 Dec 1998, on line, Internet, 8 May 1999, available from [http://defenselink.mil/news/Dec1998/t12211998\\_t1221fox.html](http://defenselink.mil/news/Dec1998/t12211998_t1221fox.html).

Mechanism - Denial through Punishment.

### **Execution**

The seven year air strategy has been executed by forces stationed in-theater and augmented as necessary to conduct the mission. Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) operations provide critical feedback and objective measurement so strategists may evaluate the success or failure of coercive operations. Air patrols conducted by fighter aircraft and AWACS fly orbits monitoring Iraqi air activity and responding to potential “excursions” from the designated area.

To accomplish the punitive strikes in response to Iraqi non-compliance an air component representing virtually all types of US aircraft has been deployed to the theater to conduct combat operations against targets of value to Iraq and Saddam Hussein. There have been sizable punitive strikes against Iraq during the peace operations, Operation Desert Fox being the most recent as of this writing. The majority of targets in these operations consisted of WMD production, storage, and delivery capabilities, command and control (Saddam) nodes, fielded forces (Republican Guard), and integrated air defense systems. A large share of these strikes were accomplished by Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAM) to minimize the risk to US aircrews. Unlike the continuous enforcement of the “no-fly” zone, the punitive strikes have been limited to four or less days at a time in response to Iraqi violations of UN resolutions.

### **Iraq Peace Operation Air Strategy Analysis**

Since the end of Desert Storm US air strategy has been conceived to accomplish specific UN objectives. The resultant course of action has been to deny operation of Iraqi military aircraft outside of prescribed boundaries and to punish the Iraqis when they do

not comply with UN mandates. This air strategy has been characterized by airborne monitoring of Iraqi military activity, intelligence collection, coupled with punitive strikes against key targets believed to be related to WMD or of significant value to Saddam's power base. Counter-air missions and strategic attack missions comprise the bulk of US military measures to force Iraqi compliance with UN resolutions.

In support of UN peace operations, coalition aircraft have been tasked with the following missions: 1) deny Iraq the ability to attack dissidents from the air; 2) be in a position to punish Saddam when he does not comply with UN mandates; and 3) provide a show of force in the region to communicate US resolve and commitment to the defense of coalition partners. To accomplish the first task, operations "Southern Watch" (OSW) and "Provide Comfort" (OPC) established Iraqi "no-fly" zones south of 32<sup>nd</sup> parallel and north of the 36<sup>th</sup> parallel to prevent the Iraqi air force from attacking dissident Kurds and Shi'as.<sup>28</sup> US air assets operate out of the SWA theater providing monitoring and coverage of the no-fly zones to deter and deny violations by Iraqi aircraft. To accomplish the second task, combat operations have been conducted to "punish and coerce" Iraq for non-compliance with UN resolution 687. Desert Fox is the most recent punitive effort conducted by air in accordance with their strategy. In accomplishing the third task, policing the exclusion zones and broadcasting presence in the theater send implicit, as well as blunt coercive signals to Saddam.<sup>29</sup>

Accurate intelligence and its interpretation provides the information that will determine costs associated with alternative courses of action. Air and space assets

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<sup>28</sup> "History of the 12<sup>th</sup> Air Force," Vol. 4, (1 Jan 92 - 31 Dec 92), 3.

contribute critical reconnaissance capabilities essential to decision-makers. Intelligence collection should be the primary focus of any course of action. The interpretation of intelligence estimates determines whether or not the current strategy is satisfactorily progressing toward the desired end state and may lead to strategy alterations. Intelligence up to this point has led decision-makers to believe that Iraq is not in compliance with UN mandates. When intelligence estimates consider Iraqi WMD and production capabilities to be destroyed the sanctions will be lifted and decisions regarding the nature of future US involvement will be made.

In order to execute the outlined air strategy the US required coalition, international, and domestic support. In Desert Storm a large coalition was formed against Iraq, international support was garnered through the UN, and domestically the US Congress voted in favor of armed intervention.<sup>30</sup> These three elements provided the authority and legitimacy for combat operations that were crucial to the success of Desert Storm. Like Desert Storm, SWA peace operations also require coalition, international, and domestic support. Arab coalition partners provide air bases in the theater which are necessary for long-term operations. International support through the UN provides legitimacy to execute the air strategy and domestic support within the US is required to send forces to conduct the operation. The air strategy must include coalition partners in planning, organization, and execution of SWA peace operations. The UN must continue to support the strategy and its execution. The US public must be informed and educated to the

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<sup>29</sup> John Hillen, “Peacekeeping at the Speed of Sound: The Relevancy of Airpower Doctrine in Operations Other Than War,” *Airpower Journal* Vol. 12, no 4 (Winter 1998): 11.

<sup>30</sup> Jeffrey Record, *Hollow Victory: A Contrary View of the Gulf War* (Brassey’s, 1993), 49.

purpose and intent of the peace operation if they are expected to support the strategy. US casualties would not bode well for future operations in SWA and drives the use of airpower in the chosen course of action (COA).<sup>31</sup> Coalition, international, and domestic factors are integral parts of the Iraqi peace operation air strategy.

## **Results**

To date the US has failed to achieve its strategic objectives. Air strikes intended to force Iraq to comply with UN resolutions have failed. Currently, weapons inspections have been indefinitely terminated as a consequence of the Iraqi response to Desert Fox and do not appear to be a viable option for future consideration. Why has the US strategy failed to achieve its objectives? I believe there are several root causes: 1) air strikes of limited duration are unable to drive Saddam's cost of non-compliance to an intolerable level; and 2) the initiation of force as a motivator for compliance is handicapped if that force is limited by political/domestic concerns--violent means that stop short of mandating compliance encourage defiance, often resulting in the initiator receiving admonishment for the use of force at all. This is the case with Iraqi peace operations and is a reality of military operations other than war (MOOTW).

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 151.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Coercive Air Strategy in the Balkans**

*At the time (1995), many people believed nothing could be done to end the bloodshed in Bosnia. They said, well that's just the way those people in the Balkans are. But when we and our allies joined with courageous Bosnians to stand up to the aggressors, we helped to end the war. We learned that in the Balkans, inaction in the face of brutality simply invites more brutality. But firmness can stop armies and save lives. We must apply that lesson in Kosovo before what happened in Bosnia happens there, too.*

—President Bill Clinton, 24 March 1999

The conflict in the Balkans represents another situation involving the use of airpower in post-Cold War peace operations. Following the collapse of the USSR, the former Yugoslavian states of Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina declared their independence, sparking conflict based on ethnic, religious, and cultural differences. Additionally, ethnic Albanians in the Serbian province of Kosovo are being denied the right to provincial government by Serbia. Policy makers are now faced with two simultaneous, difficult situations - Iraq and the Balkans. US involvement is predicated upon the utility of airpower, a reluctance to commit ground forces, and a desire to solve the conflict quickly. This chapter examines the situation in the Balkans from June of 1991 through March 1999, its background, assumptions, the UN/US desired end state, the

coercive air strategy employed to achieve the end state, its execution and the results.<sup>32</sup>

The results of this analysis will lead to the comparison of the factors affecting the air strategies and the resultant air strategies employed in Iraq and the Balkans.

**Figure 3: Historical Summary of Peace Operations in the Balkans**

<u>1989</u>	
Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic strips Kosovo of its autonomy. Street violence erupts when the Kosovo Assembly approves the measure. Violence escalates and more than 20 people are killed.	
	<u>1990</u>
Jan:	Serbian police shoot and kill ten ethnic Albanians in Kosovo during street violence.
Feb:	Yugoslavia deploys troops, tanks, aircraft, and 2,000 troops to Kosovo. A curfew is imposed, while upwards of 20 more people have been killed in street fighting.
Jul:	Ethnic Albanians in Kosovo declare independence of the province. Serbia dissolves the Kosovo Assembly, strikes and protests continue.
	<u>1991</u>
Jun:	Croatia and Slovenia declare independence and fighting starts in Croatia and Bosnia.
Sep:	The UN establishes an arms embargo in the Balkan region.
Dec:	Krajina Serbs declare independence from Croatia.
	Albania's parliament recognizes Kosovo as an independent republic.
	<u>1992</u>
Jan:	EU recognizes Croatia and Slovenia as independent states. 14,000 UN peacekeeping troops are deployed in Croatia.
Mar:	Bosnia votes overwhelmingly for independence, Bosnian Serbs boycott this poll. Fighting starts and Bosnian Serbs backed by the Serbian controlled Yugoslavian army hold 60% of Bosnia's territory. The Bosnian Serbs lay siege to Sarajevo.
May:	The UN imposes economic sanctions against Serbia. The EU recognizes Bosnia as an independent state and the US recognizes independent Croatian, Slovenian, and Bosnian states. Writer Ibrahim Rugova is elected president of self-proclaimed Kosovo republic in an election held in defiance of Serbian authorities.
Oct:	The UN establishes a "no-fly" zone over Bosnia. Serb and ethnic Albanian leaders in Kosovo hold face-to-face peace talks for the first time in three years.
	<u>1993</u>
Apr:	NATO begins air operations as part of the "no-fly" enforcement.
May:	Sarajevo and five other safe areas established under UN protection. NATO promises air attack in response to Serbian attacks on safe areas.
	Early in 1993 the UN deploys peacekeeping troops to Macedonia and the US decides to participate in Balkan peace operations.
	<u>1994</u>
Feb:	Serbian artillery shell kills 68 people in Sarajevo, NATO threatens air strikes if Serbian forces refuse to withdrawal. Serbian forces appear to comply with demands.
Mar:	Fighting stops between Muslims and Croats.
Apr:	NATO executes first air strike in protection of a UN safe area—Gorazde.
Spring:	A diplomatic contact group consisting of the US, Russia, UK, France, and Germany is established.
Dec:	Belligerents agree to a four month cessation of hostilities. Fighting resumes at the end of the four month period.
Late 94:	New fighting erupts between Muslims, Bosnian government, and Bosnian Serbs. NATO expands air strikes into Serb controlled Croatia.
	<u>1995</u>
Mar:	Bosnian Serbs launch major offensive, capture more than 350 UN peacekeepers. Serbia intervenes to negotiate release of peacekeepers.
May:	Croats recapture and claim western Slovenia, Krajina Serbs launch a rocket attack against Zagreb in response and Bosnian Serbs shell Sarajevo. NATO conducts air strikes in response.

<sup>32</sup> "Congressional Digest," (US State Department: February 1996): 37.

Jul:	Two UN protected safe areas fall to Bosnian Serbs.
Aug:	NATO threatens air strikes in response to Serbian aggression. Croatia retakes Krajina region. Serbian artillery shell kills 37 in Sarajevo, Deliberate Force begins.
Sep :	Bosnian Serbs agree to retreat, NATO temporarily stops bombing. Muslim/Croat offensive retakes 1,500 square miles. Serbs fail to comply with UN demands for withdrawal and NATO bombing resumes through the 14 <sup>th</sup> .
Nov:	Dayton peace agreement reached.
Dec:	Dayton peace agreement signed and 60,000 NATO peacekeeping force has kept peace since.
<u>1996</u>	
The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) emerges and claims responsibility for bombings in Kosovo.	
<u>1997</u>	
Violence escalates as KLA and Serb police intensify conflict.	
<u>1998</u>	
Jan-Mar:	Ethnic Serb politician killed in reprisal for the killing of an ethnic Albanian by Serbian police. Albanian separatists are killed, houses are burned and villages evacuated. Kosovo's Albanian leader demands outright independence for Kosovo. Serbs escalate their effort to put down the Albanian uprising.
Apr:	The contact group minus Russia agree to impose new sanctions against Yugoslavia over Kosovo.
May-Jul:	Peace talks between Serbian and ethnic Albanians begin. UN warns NATO that it must seek a UN mandate for military intervention. France and Britain draft a UN resolution for a cease-fire.
Aug-Sep:	Serbia launches a massive one month offensive, severely weakening the KLA. The UN calls for a cease-fire. Serbian army continues attacks against ethnic Albanian villages. The UN adopts a resolution for a cease-fire in Kosovo and warns Yugoslav government of "additional measures" if it fails to comply. Heavy fighting continues.
Oct:	NATO threatens airstrikes. Yugoslavia agrees to allow 2,000 peacekeeping troops into Kosovo to monitor the cease-fire. Peacekeeping forces never get inside Kosovo.
Dec:	Fighting resumes between Serbian forces and ethnic Albanians.
<u>1999</u>	
Mar 24:	NATO begins coercive air campaign against Yugoslavia. (Operation Allied Force)

*Source:* Timeline is compiled from: "Timeline: Countdown to Conflict," 18 Jan 1999, n.p.; on line, Internet, 19 Mar 1999, available from [http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/special\\_report/1998/kosovo/newsid\\_99000/99748.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/special_report/1998/kosovo/newsid_99000/99748.stm). "Bosnia Fact Sheet: Chronology of the Balkan Conflict," 6 Dec 1995, n.p.; on line, Internet, 31 Mar 1999, available from [http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eur/bosnia/balkan\\_conflict\\_chron.html](http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eur/bosnia/balkan_conflict_chron.html). "The Road to the Dayton Peace Agreement," 6 Dec 1995, n.p.; on line, Internet, 31 Mar 1999, available from [http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eur/bosnia/bosnia\\_peace-agreement.html](http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eur/bosnia/bosnia_peace-agreement.html). "Congressional Digest," (US State Department: February 1996): 37. "Yugoslavia's Birth to its Breakup," no date, n.p.; on line, Internet, 19 Mar 1999, available from [http://www.xss4all.nl/~frankti/Warhistory/war\\_hist.html](http://www.xss4all.nl/~frankti/Warhistory/war_hist.html).

## Background

The current conflict in the Balkans is a product of the continuing struggle between diverse cultures and religions over territory and power. There are three main players: the Catholic Croatians, the Orthodox Christian Serbians, and in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croats,

Serbs, and a large Muslim population (43.7%).<sup>33</sup> The conflict is between the Serbs, some of the states surrounding Serbia, and the ethnic Albanians in the Serbian province of Kosovo over territory and governmental representation. Serbia was the dominant player prior to the break-up of the Soviet Union and is trying to retain its position through force. The Muslims are literally caught in the middle of the struggle in Bosnia and have been claimed by Croats and Serbs to add legitimacy to their claims.<sup>34</sup>

The historical context of the conflict is important to help understand the nature and scope of the task facing modern policymakers and strategists. In the mid 15<sup>th</sup> century the Ottoman Turks invaded and conquered the region, subjugating the Catholic and orthodox Christian population. In 1876 the Christian peasants rebelled against their Slavic Muslim overlords and were supported by Serbia and Montenegro. Russia entered into the conflict on the side of the Christian peasants and crushed the Ottoman army in 1878.<sup>35</sup> The region was placed under Austro-Hungarian administration in 1878 in an attempt to maintain the European balance of power. The three cultures--18% Croat, 42% Serb, and 32% Muslim--coexisted until Bosnia-Herzegovina was annexed by Austria-Hungary in 1908.<sup>36</sup> The annexation outraged Serbian nationalists, culminating with the assassination of the Austrian archduke Ferdinand by a Serbian student, Gavrilo Princip, in June of 1914. The assassination triggered World War I.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Steven J. Woehrel, "Bosnia-Herzegovina: Background to the Conflict," *CRS Report to Congress* (Jan 1993), summary.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 2.

During the inter-war period the region was labeled the “Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes” and was dominated by the Serbs. This period saw Croat resistance to Serb dominance, while the Muslims reached an agreement with the Serbs to recognize and tolerate their religion. However, hundreds of thousands of Muslims immigrated to Turkey during this period despite Serbian religious concessions.<sup>38</sup>

After the German conquest of Yugoslavia in 1941, Bosnia-Herzegovina was annexed to the newly created independent state of Croatia. During World War II the “Ustashe,” a fascist organization, attempted to expel one third of the Serbs from Bosnia-Herzegovina, convert one third of the population to Catholicism, and kill the remaining third.<sup>39</sup> The Muslims split three ways under Ustashe pressure, those that supported the Ustashe movement, those that sided with the communists fighting the Ustashe, and the third group that desired a separate Bosnia allied with Germany.<sup>40</sup>

Following the Second World War, Bosnia Herzegovina became a Republic within Tito’s Yugoslav federation. The Muslims were recognized as a national group instead of a religious group to stay Croat and Serb attempts to claim the Muslims as Croats or Serbs, thus creating an overwhelming majority of one or the other. Tito controlled ethnic and religious conflict during his iron rule over the region. When Tito died in 1980, however, conflict between these groups resurfaced and Slobodan Milosevic, a hard-line nationalist Serb and communist, rose to power in Serbia in the late 1980’s.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 3.

In 1989, Soviet Russia collapsed, Serbia revoked Kosovo's political autonomy and street violence erupted in Kosovo as a result. During 1990 elections were held in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Kosovo violent clashes between ethnic Albanians and Serbian police continued.<sup>42</sup> Ethnic Albanian legislators in Kosovo declared independence and Serbia dissolved the Kosovo assembly.<sup>43</sup>

In Bosnia Herzegovina a three-party coalition government representing the Croats, Serbs, and Muslims was elected and in June of 1991 Slovenia and Croatia declared their independence from Yugoslavia. Slovenia and Croatia were recognized by the European Community (EC, later the EU) and war broke out between the Serbs and the Croats.<sup>44</sup> Albania's parliament recognized Kosovo as an independent republic.<sup>45</sup> Fighting in Bosnia erupted over territory in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Unauthorized airstrikes out of Bosnia-Herzegovina were flown against the Croats supporting the "Krajina" Serbs inside Croatia.

In March of 1992, Bosnia-Herzegovina applied for independence and was recognized by the EU and the US, the US recognizing Slovenia and Croatia at the same

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<sup>42</sup> Steven J. Woehrel, "Bosnia-Hercegovina: Background to the Conflict," *CRS Report to Congress* (Jan 1993), 3. "Timeline: Countdown to Conflict," 18 Jan 1999, n.p.; on line, Internet, 19 Mar 1999, available from [http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/special\\_report/1998/kosovo/newsid\\_99000/99748.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/special_report/1998/kosovo/newsid_99000/99748.stm).

<sup>43</sup> "Timeline: Countdown to Conflict," 18 Jan 1999, n.p.; on line, Internet, 19 Mar 1999, available from [http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/special\\_report/1998/kosovo/newsid\\_99000/99748.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/special_report/1998/kosovo/newsid_99000/99748.stm).

<sup>44</sup> Steven J. Woehrel, "Bosnia-Hercegovina: Background to the Conflict," *CRS Report to Congress* (Jan 1993), 3.

<sup>45</sup> "Timeline: Countdown to Conflict," 18 Jan 1999, n.p.; on line, Internet, 19 Mar 1999, available from [http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/special\\_report/1998/kosovo/newsid\\_99000/99748.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/special_report/1998/kosovo/newsid_99000/99748.stm).

time.<sup>46</sup> The Bosnian coalition government planned to separate Bosnia into three ethnically based cantons but could not agree on the territorial boundaries of these cantons. The ethnic Serbs inside Bosnia started fighting on 4 April 1992 and captured two-thirds of Bosnia-Herzegovina with the help of the Yugoslavian Peoples Army (YPA). The Bosnian Serbs subsequently laid siege to Sarajevo and were supported by the Montenegrin Serbs. A cease-fire between Croatian and Serb forces took effect in November of 1992.<sup>47</sup>

The current United States involvement in the region began in 1992 with the recognition of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Slovenia, and Croatia.<sup>48</sup> The US supported UN efforts to keep and enforce the peace with airpower in operations Deny Flight, Deliberate Force, and most recently Allied Force, but has been reluctant to commit ground forces in the region.<sup>49</sup> The first use of US airpower in support of the UN peacekeeping operation occurred in April 1993 and continues at the time of this writing.<sup>50</sup> At its core the conflict in the Balkans remains disagreements over territory and the power gained through its possession. The disputed territory is Bosnia-Herzegovina and the province of Kosovo. On the one side, the Serbs are attempting to gain/retain this territory and on the other the Croats, Muslims, and ethnic Albanians are attempting to deny Serbian hegemony. The

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<sup>46</sup> “Congressional Digest,” (US State Department: February 1996), 37.

<sup>47</sup> Steven J. Woehrel, “Bosnia-Herzegovina: Background to the Conflict,” *CRS Report to Congress* (Jan 1993), 6.

<sup>48</sup> “Congressional Digest,” (US State Department: February 1996), 37.

<sup>49</sup> Craig R. Whitney. “NATO Assures 5 Neighbors That Fear Serbian Ground Attack,” *New York Times* (25 Mar 1999): A-13.

<sup>50</sup> “Yugoslavia’s Birth to its Breakup,” no date, n.p.; on line, Internet, 19 Mar 1999, available from [http://www.xss4all.nl/~frankti/Warhistory/war\\_hist.html](http://www.xss4all.nl/~frankti/Warhistory/war_hist.html).

US is using airpower as a diplomatic tool against Serbia and its leader Slobodan Milosevic to stop the violent conflict in the region.

### **Assumptions**

The US Balkan operational assumptions are similar to those in Iraq: 1) without UN support the US will lack authority and legitimacy in the region; 2) if US casualties occur, domestic support will dwindle; 3) there is a limit to the pain the targeted party will endure; and 4) targets for coercive airpower can be identified. The decision to employ airpower to stop the fighting in the Balkans is based on these assumptions. Airpower represents a “low risk” US contribution to the UN effort and has been heralded by some as “the” answer.<sup>51</sup>

Assumptions differ between the major players in the region. The Croats assume that the Serbs want to dominate the region and that the UN will side with the group on the defensive. The Muslims and ethnic Albanians in Kosovo assume that they will receive outside help either from the UN, NATO, or both. The Muslims also assume they will be supported by other Islamic nations. The Serbs assume that the worst possible outcome of the conflict will be to leave pre-hostility Serbia intact, that UN efforts to stop aggression will be of short and limited duration, and that the UN and US are unwilling to incur significant casualties in their effort to keep or enforce the peace. All assume that outside assistance is limited in scope and duration causing urgency on the part of some and giving pause on the part of others.

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<sup>51</sup> Brooks Bash, “The Role of US Airpower in Peacekeeping,” (Maxwell AFB, AL: AU Press, June 1994), 11.

## **Desired End State**

An acceptable end state from the UN/US perspective would be three independent, stable, non-aggressive nations and one Serbian province free from Serbian aggression: Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, and Kosovo respectively. In the future all exist autonomously as neighbors without attacking one another. The requirement for outside intervention would cease to exist.

Croatia and Serbia, on the other hand, want to expand their borders to include Bosnia-Herzegovina. Kosovo wants independence from Serbia and the Muslim population living in the Balkan region wants the freedom to practice their religion without fear. This would require Muslim representation in the government of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The fighting in Bosnia ceased in 1995 and a multi-national peacekeeping force monitors what is close to the pre-hostility borders of Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Serbia.<sup>52</sup> Hostilities still continue in Kosovo, however, as Serbia refuses to allow UN peacekeeping forces in country to quell the violence while Serbia and Kosovo peacefully settle their dispute over Kosovo's independence.<sup>53</sup> How does the world convince the Serbs to peacefully settle its disputes and fight only in defense of its dwindling internationally accepted territorial borders? The coercive air strategy designed to achieve this manipulation was developed in accordance with the factors in Figure 4:

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<sup>52</sup> "Yugoslavia's Birth to its Breakup," no date, n.p.; on line, Internet, 19 Mar 1999, available from [http://www.xss4all.nl/~frankti/Warhistory/war\\_hist.html](http://www.xss4all.nl/~frankti/Warhistory/war_hist.html).

<sup>53</sup> Jonathon. P. Landay, "US Troops in Bosnia Depend on Array of High-Tech Eyes, Ears," *Christian Science Monitor* (26 Dec 1995): 1.

**Figure 4: Factors Affecting Air Strategy in the Balkans:**

<b>Airpower objectives:</b> 1) deny flight of hostile aircraft inside exclusion zones, 2) prevent advance of enemy ground forces, 3) to raise the costs of non-compliance to an intolerable level, and 4) accomplish the first three objectives with minimal civilian casualties and minimal friendly aircraft losses.
<b>Nature of the conflict:</b> Intra-state, insurgency. Ground support during Deliberate Force by Croats and Muslims. No ground support or threat of ground action to this point of Allied Force—air only.
<b>Legitimacy:</b> Provided through NATO and humanitarian concerns.
<b>Political constraints</b> Coalition support required. Numerous states involved.
<b>Domestic constraints:</b> US casualties must be kept to a minimum.
<b>Terrain/Weather:</b> Mountainous, wooded, and urban. Clouds and rain. Unfavorable conditions for airpower.
<b>Intelligence:</b> Presents opposing views and is limited by numerous requests.
<b>Enemy valuables:</b> Territory. Milosevic's power base—his position and military.
<b>Enemy position/force type:</b> The Serbian military forces have been dispersed and often in urban areas. The Serbian army is a conventional force, but has been employing other than conventional tactics. <sup>54</sup>
<b>Enemy vulnerabilities:</b> Serbia has little outside assistance from other nations.
<b>Target identification:</b> Limited by intelligence, terrain, and weather.
<b>Feedback/Measurement:</b> Limited, true measure of success is the willingness of Serbia to negotiate on NATO's terms.
<b>Threats:</b> High, requires assets and planning to negate.
<b>Time:</b> Determined by Milosevic.
<b>Costs:</b> Ultimately determined by time (Milosevic).

<sup>54</sup> Synthesized from several sources: Col Robert Owen, "The Balkans Air Campaign Study: Part I," *Airpower Journal* (Summer 1997): 9; 18. Col Robert Owen, "The Balkans Air Campaign Study: Part II," *Airpower Journal* (Fall 1997): 13. Julie Bird, "Other Operations are Still Critical," *Air Force Times* (Oct 24 1994): 17. "Fact Sheet: US and NATO Objectives and Interests in Kosovo," 26 March 1999, n.p.; on line, Internet, 31 Mar 1999, available from <http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eur>.

## Balkan Peace Operations Involving Coercive Airpower

### Deny Flight

Situation - Bosnian Serbs, well-trained and equipped, are fighting in opposition to Bosnia's newly recognized international independence. Fighting is spread throughout Croatia and Bosnia between the Bosnian Serbs, Croats, and Bosnian Muslims over territory inside Croatia and Bosnia. In October of 1992 the UN establishes a military "no-fly" zone in Bosnian airspace which is violated more than 500 times. In response to these violations and the ongoing fighting NATO begins Operation Deny Flight to enforce the UN established "no-fly" zone.

Objectives - 1) prevent the flight of fixed wing and rotary-wing aircraft inside the designated exclusion zone; 2) protect UN Protection Forces (UNPROFOR) in theater from ground attack (CAS); 3) protect the five UN designated safe areas from attack; 4) prevent the positioning of heavy weapons inside the heavy weapons exclusion zones; 5) demonstrate UN resolve; and 6) accomplish the preceding objectives with minimal loss of aircraft or life.

Targets - Aircraft or helicopters violating the "no-fly" zone and military targets threatening or attacking UN forces and/or safe areas.

Effects - For two years NATO airpower conducted operations in support of the objectives. Some Serbian aircraft violating no-fly zones were shot down and ground targets threatening UN safe areas were attacked, yet the Bosnian Serbs continued their attacks on UN safe areas and violations of the no-fly/heavy weapon exclusion zones. This behavior prompted Operation Deliberate Force.

Mechanism - Denial—making it futile for the enemy to violate the no-fly zone, heavy weapons exclusion zones, or attack a UN safe area. The reality of this futility comes as a result of punishment for non-compliant behavior. Denial through punishment.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> "NATO Operation Deny Flight," 25 May 1995, n.p.; on line, Internet, 31 Mar 1999, available from <http://www.eucom.mil/operations/af>.

## **Dead Eye/Deliberate Force**

Situation - Serbian non-compliance through continued Serbian aggression in the face of UN/NATO mandates and warnings. Serbian mortar attack kills 38 in Sarajevo, triggering Operations Dead Eye and Deliberate Force.

Objectives - 1) disrupt the IADS in Bosnia to reduce the risk to NATO aircraft in Deliberate Force; and 2) “reduce the Bosnian Serb’s military capability to threaten or attack safe areas and UN forces.”

Targets - “Enemy IADS, fielded forces/heavy weapons, command and control facilities, direct and essential military support facilities, and supporting infrastructure/lines of communication.”

Effects - After less than three weeks of air strikes the warring factions agree to a UN brokered peace initiative. In conjunction with Deliberate Force, Croatian and Muslim ground forces were re-gaining lost territory in Croatia and Northwestern Bosnia.

Mechanism - Denial of objectives through punishment for non-compliant behavior. The fact that the Serb’s were losing the ground war must be taken into account when considering the effects of Deliberate Force.<sup>56</sup>

## **Allied Force**

Situation - In Oct 1998, Serbia agreed to allow a UN peacekeeping force into Kosovo; however, Former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) forces moved into Kosovo and accelerated repression of the ethnic Albanian population creating a humanitarian crisis. Reports of executions, rape, and arson committed by FRY forces against the ethnic Albanians are confirmed.

Objectives - 1) stop the Serbian offensive in Kosovo; 2) force a withdrawal of Serb troops from Kosovo; 3) allow democratic self-government in Kosovo; 4) allow a NATO-led international peacekeeping force into Kosovo; and 5) allow the safe and peaceful return of Kosovar Albanian refugees.

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<sup>56</sup> “Operation Dead Eye and Deliberate Force,” no date, n.p.; on line, Internet, 31 Mar 1999, available from <http://www.eucom.mil/operations/af>.

Targets - Serbian IADS, fielded forces/heavy weapons, command and control facilities, direct and essential military support facilities, and supporting infrastructure/lines of communication.

Effects - FRY forces intensified their assault of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo resulting in thousands of refugees flooding neighboring states. As of this writing Allied Force is in its 43<sup>rd</sup> day of strikes, no agreement has been reached, and the US is adamant about not committing ground forces.

Mechanism - The object is to “limit Milosevic’s ability to make war.” A denial campaign initiated to punish Milosevic for wanton aggression.<sup>57</sup>

### **Balkan Peace Operation Air Strategy Synthesis**

The air strategy designed to support UN/US policy in the Balkans has several major objectives: 1) stop attacks on the safe areas, the population, and UN forces; 2) prohibit heavy weapons inside exclusion zones; 3) establish an environment conducive to peacebuilding and restoration; 4) represent/deliver punishment to parties in violation of UN resolutions; and 5) accomplish this mission at minimum cost in terms of lives, time, and money. Combined air forces operating under the auspices of NATO and headquartered out of Vincenza, Italy have been given the mission of achieving the previously identified objectives. The Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) at 5<sup>th</sup> Allied Tactical Air Force (ATAF), in Vincenza, Italy, has exercised centralized command and control of Coalition air forces during the Balkan peace operations.<sup>58</sup> Balkan peace

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<sup>57</sup> “Operation Allied Force,” *EUCOM*, 8 May 1999, n.p.; on line, Internet, 8 May 1999, available from <http://www.eucom.mil/operations/af>. Statement by President Clinton to the Nation from the White house 24 Mar 1999, n.p.; on line, Internet, 8 May 1999, available from <http://www.pub.whitehouse.gov/uri-res/I2R?urn:pdi://oma.eop.gov.us/1999/3/25/1.text.1>.

<sup>58</sup> Col Robert Owen, “The Balkans Air Campaign Study: Part I,” *Airpower Journal* (Summer 1997): 14.

operation tactical airpower has been land and carrier based inside the theater of operations.<sup>59</sup>

During operation Deny Flight, the task of airpower was to establish a “no-fly” zone in and around the UN declared “safe areas.”<sup>60</sup> Twenty-four hour combat air patrols (CAPs) were flown to show presence and deny flight into the exclusion zones. Airborne Warning and Control (AWAC aircraft) and tankers were essential to providing the necessary coverage to accomplish the mission. Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance tasking was given to monitor the movement and activity of forces in and around the safe areas.

In response to the explosion of a mortar inside a Sarajevo market killing 37 people on 28 August 1995 the UN and US raised the stakes and began operation Deliberate Force.<sup>61</sup> Deliberate Force saw air attacks on valuable Serbian strategic targets, Serbian integrated air defense system (IADS), and Serbian heavy weapons. Deliberate Force was very small compared to Desert Storm, consisting of 3,515 aircraft sorties, dropping 1,026 weapons, against 48 targets over a 22 day period.<sup>62</sup>

The ultimate goal for the use of airpower during Deny Flight, Deliberate Force, and Allied Force was to raise the costs of further non-compliance above Serbian tolerance levels. With this in mind, air strategists focused on both strategic counter-value

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<sup>59</sup> Col Robert Corsini, “The Balkan War: What Role for Airpower,”(Maxwell AFB, AL: AWC Research Report, April 1995), 9. “Fact Sheet, U.S. Forces in Kosovo Theater,” 24 Mar 1999, n.p.; on line, Internet, 31 Mar 1999, available from <http://www.cdi.org/issues/Europe/kosvforc3.html>.

<sup>60</sup> Col Robert Owen, “The Balkans Air Campaign Study: Part I,” *Airpower Journal* (Summer 1997): 15.

<sup>61</sup> Col Robert Owen, “The Balkans Air Campaign Study: Part II,” *Airpower Journal* (Fall 1997): 6.

targets and counter force targets. Minimizing collateral damage was critical to the success of these operations and precision weapons and good weather were crucial to this aspect of the operation.

## **Execution**

The six-year Balkan air strategy has been executed by NATO forces stationed in theater, carrier based assets, and augmented as necessary to conduct the mission. The majority of US air forces have operated out of Aviano airbase (AB), Italy. Accurate intelligence has proven critical to the planning and assessment of operations providing insight for future operations. Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) is accomplished through space, air, and ground based assets. The synthesis of this information provides feedback and guidance for day to day operations.

Air patrols conducted by fighter aircraft and AWACS fly orbits monitoring air activity in the vicinity of the exclusion zones and respond to potential “excursions” from the designated areas. To accomplish the punitive strikes in response to non-compliance, an air component representing virtually all types of US aircraft have been deployed to the theater to conduct combat operations against perceived targets of value.<sup>63</sup> There have been sizable punitive strikes against the Serbs during Deliberate Force and Allied Force where NATO is currently attacking the Serbs in response to the situation in Kosovo.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>63</sup> Craig Covault, “Air Power Alters Bosnia Equation,” *Aviation Week and Space Technology* (4 Sept 1995): 23; “Fact Sheet: US Forces in the Kosovo Theater,” *Center for Defense Information*, 24 Mar 1999, n.p.; on line, Internet, 31 Mar 1999, available from <http://www.cdi.org/issues/Europe/kosvforc3.html>.

<sup>64</sup> Craig Covault, “NATO Air Strikes Target Serbian Infrastructure,” *Aviation Week and Space Technology* (11 Sept 1995): 27; “NATO Attacks Serbs to Prevent

The majority of targets in these operations have consisted of command and control nodes, fielded forces, and integrated air defense systems.<sup>65</sup> Some of these strikes were accomplished by TLAMs to minimize the risk involved to NATO aircrews.<sup>66</sup> Unlike the continuous enforcement of the “no-fly” zone the punitive strikes have lasted for limited periods of time. Allied Force, however, is in its second month and promises to continue until Milosevic complies with NATO’s demands.

## **Results**

To date the UN/NATO/US have failed to achieve their strategic objectives. Air strikes intended to force compliance with UN resolutions have succeeded operationally but failed to achieve the desired strategic end state. Currently, the Serbs are holding out against NATO air strikes in response to Serbian aggression in Kosovo. Why has the air strategy failed to achieve its objectives? 1) like Iraq, air strikes of limited duration are unable to drive the costs of non-compliance to intolerable levels resulting in compliance; 2) force, as a tool of coercion is handicapped if it is limited by political/domestic concerns; and 3) violent means that stop short of mandating compliance encourage defiance—the case in both Iraq and the Balkans.

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Killings,” 24 Mar 1999, n.p.; on line, Internet, 31 Mar 1999, available from <http://www.usafe.af.mil/kosovo/afps-03.htm>.

<sup>65</sup> Craig Covault, “NATO Air Strikes Target Serbian Infrastructure,” *Aviation Week and Space Technology* (11 Sept 1995): 27-28. Francis X. Clines, “The Biggest Assault in Europe Since the War,” *New York Times*, (25 March 1999): A1.

<sup>66</sup> Col Robert Owen, “The Balkans Air Campaign Study: Part II,” *Airpower Journal* (Fall 1997): 12.

## Chapter 4

### Iraq and The Balkans: A comparison

*The US will thus be faced with an international environment demanding increased peacekeeping participation and a domestic environment cautioning against casualties. To resolve this apparent dilemma, policymakers are likely to first consider lower risk airpower options.*

—Brooks Bash

Are there any commonalities between the air strategies in Iraq and Bosnia that could be pertinent to future use of airpower in peace operations? The purpose of this chapter is to compare Iraq and Bosnia, the end states, objectives, air strategies, and the results of each to highlight similarities and differences for educational purposes and practical consideration. Figure 5 reveals the similarities and differences of the factors involved in each of the coercive air strategies.

**Figure 5: Comparison of Factors Affecting Air Strategies**

Factor	Iraq	Balkans
Objectives	Clear/hard to measure	Clear
Nature of the conflict	State verses State (UN) US - Limited/conventional <small>Iraq - Limited/conventional</small>	Counter-insurgency/Humanitarian US - Limited, conventional <small>EDV - Territorial non conventional</small>
Legitimacy	UN/Economic	NATO/Humanitarian
Political restraints	Coalition/Basing	UN/NATO alliance
Domestic restraints	US casualties	US casualties/US Balkan population
Terrain/Weather	Open terrain/Ideal weather	Adverse, Urban/Poor weather
Intelligence	Focused/limited	Broad/limited
Enemy valuables	WMD, military, government	Territory, military, government

Enemy vulnerabilities	leadership/military	limited outside support/leadership
Targets	Concentrated/static	Dispersed/hidden/in cities
Target identification	Good conditions	Difficult conditions
Feedback/Measurement	Technical/Subjective	Technical and human/Behavioral
Threats	High/WMD	High/No WMD
Time	Objective/enemy controlled	Objective/enemy controlled
Costs	Objective/enemy controlled	Objective/enemy controlled

### Differences

Figure 5 highlights several important differences between the situation in Iraq and the situation in the Balkans. First, the nature of the two conflicts is different. The situation in Iraq is a conventional inter-state conflict that is a result of the Desert Storm conflict resolution process. It involves mandating compliance with an agreement concerning WMD. US legitimacy is based on the UN coalition support, and economic welfare. SWA is a major contributor to the world's oil supply and Iraqi dominance of the region would represent a threat to the world's economy--specifically, that of Europe and the Americas.<sup>67</sup>

The situation in Bosnia, on the other hand, is a non-conventional, civil war that began as a peacekeeping operation. Peace enforcement operations have been conducted to oppose Serbian aggression in Bosnia as well as to limit Serbian aggression Kosovo. US Legitimacy in the Balkans is not economically based like in Iraq; Bosnia is important to the US because of NATO ties and human rights issues.

Secondly, the political restraints restricting coercive air strategy are different. Both situations are supported by collective security organizations and involve coalitions, but the nature of the coalitions is much different. The coalition against Iraq is a non-NATO

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<sup>67</sup> James Schlesinger, "Will War Yield Oil Security?" *Challenge* (Mar/Apr 1991): 25.

alliance created for the sole purpose of thwarting Iraqi dominance of SWA.<sup>68</sup> It was developed out of necessity and its members are not bound by treaty like NATO members. The coalition formed in Bosnia is NATO sponsored and based on NATO's charter. Its future and operations are less tenuous than those of the SWA coalition.

Another political difference is the target of coercive air strategy. The situation in Iraq involves a single belligerent, "coercee," or enemy, while in the Balkans there have been at least four nationalities involved in the conflict: Serb, Croat, Muslim, and Albanian.<sup>69</sup> Strategy in Iraq is aimed at Saddam Hussein and compliance with UNSCR 687.<sup>70</sup> Strategy in Bosnia is aimed at the most identifiable guilty aggressor which is situationally dependent. This is a major difference, making planning, execution, and evaluation of any operation more complicated in Bosnia where effectiveness must be measured by the reaction of more than one party.

Another politically restrictive dimension is the basing of coalition air assets. Airpower basing is more restricted in Iraq than it is in Bosnia. This is due in part to the differences in size of the respective area of operations (AO). The Iraqi AO is approximately 366,000 square miles, compared to the Balkan AO that is approximately 145,500 square miles.<sup>71</sup> In Iraq this means that air assets must be located in adjacent countries or sea based. Lacking land based facilities air operations in Iraq are severely

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<sup>68</sup> "The United Nations and the Iraq-Kuwait Conflict 199096," (UN Dept. of Public Information, 1996), 121.

<sup>69</sup> "Bosnia Fact Sheet: Chronology of the Balkan Conflict," 6 Dec 1995, n.p.; on line, Internet, 31 Mar 1999, available from [http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eur/bosnia/balkan\\_conflict\\_chron.html](http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eur/bosnia/balkan_conflict_chron.html).

<sup>70</sup> "History of the Joint Task Force-Southwest Asia," Vol. I *Narrative* (Jan 1994), 1-2.

<sup>71</sup> Central Intelligence Agency maps. "Iraq." Map. CIA. Jun 1998. "Balkans." Map. CIA. Feb 1996.

limited and being dependent on a crisis based coalition these facilities are not a given.<sup>72</sup>

The Balkan's geographic location and size allow land-based aircraft to operate out of NATO bases in Europe and are not as questionable as the facilities in the Iraqi AO.

A third difference is the environment of operations--terrain/weather and their affect on target identification. Iraq is located in a desert region with little vegetation and predominantly good weather. This environment is optimum for airpower and laser-guided precision weapons. Bosnia is not a desert. The Balkan region is hilly, forested, and the weather is erratic--often poor.<sup>73</sup> These conditions make it harder for airpower to affect ground targets in Bosnia than in Iraq.

Fourth, the measure of strategic assessment in each situation is different. The measurement of WMD in Iraq is subjective and is not quantifiable, while the measurement in the Balkans is based upon observable behavior. A non-quantifiable and unobservable objective is harder to achieve than a quantifiable, observable objective.

Fifth, the threat is different between Iraq and the Balkans. The situation in Iraq involves WMD while the situation in Bosnia does not. Strategy considerations involving WMD are complicated: location, targeting/collateral damage, protection against, and response courses of action are issues impacting strategies against enemies possessing WMD—i.e., Iraq. Strategists in Bosnia do not have to consider these elements in planning, execution, and evaluation.

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<sup>72</sup> Fariborz L. Mokhtari, ed., *Peacemaking, Peacekeeping and Coalition Warfare: The Future Role of the United Nations* (Washington, D.C: National Defense University, 1994), 191.

<sup>73</sup> “Bosnia,” *The Dorling Kindersley World Reference Atlas* (New York: Dorling Kindersley Publishing Inc, 1996), 116.

In Summation, there are seven differences between Iraqi and Balkan situations:

1) Iraq is a conventional, inter-state conflict, while the Balkans represents a non-conventional, intra-state conflict; 2) legitimacy is different in each: the US is involved in Iraq as a result of Desert Storm, UN mandates, and oil (economy), while the US is involved in the Balkans as a member of NATO and for humanitarian principles; 3) Iraq involves a single target for coercive airpower, a tenuous coalition, and critical intra-theater basing requirements, while the Balkans present several targets of coercion, a solid coalition, and abundant intra-theater basing facilities; 4) the terrain, vegetation, and weather are significantly different affecting; 5) target acquisition; 6) objective measurement in Iraq is not observable, while the objective in the Balkans is; and 7) WMD is a consideration in Iraq and not in the Balkans.

### **Similarities**

Both situations have similarities that occur because of their violent nature. To start, each situation is result of hostile conflict--the use of force to acquire territory--Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the Balkan land grab between the Croats, Serbs, and ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. In both situations the UN and/or NATO responded with sanctions providing a charter for the international use of force to restore borders and peace.<sup>74</sup>

Both situations have seen the use of airpower as a diplomatic tool in the peace process. Airpower has been the primary means of coercion to motivate the desired

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<sup>74</sup> "History of the Joint Task Force-Southwest Asia," Vol. I *Narrative* (Jan 1994), 1-2. "UN Security Council Resolution 1199 (1998)," 23 Sept 1998, n.p.; on line, Internet, 31 Mar 1999, available from <http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eur>. NATO did not have UN approval to launch Operation Allied Force.

behavior of the belligerents. In Iraq and the Balkans the use of airpower has been limited and metered carefully by its wielders.<sup>75</sup> This seems to be a trend of the future.

A primary reason for the heavy reliance on airpower in both these situations is the low risk of “friendly” coalition casualties in conducting air operations.<sup>76</sup> Additionally, modern airpower is capable of surgical strikes under the right conditions minimizing casualties on the receiving end as well.<sup>77</sup> The ability to coerce with little loss of life is most desirable in a peace operation. If a coalition aircraft is lost the number of casualties would be comparably small to the loss of a company or battalion. Unlike ground forces, air forces cannot be held hostage, pilots/aircrew may be captured after shootdown and held hostage but the small numbers involved result in a lower overall risk factor concerning the use of air forces compared to ground forces. Airpower is quickly deployable and does not require the logistical support of a lengthy ground deployment. Airpower is more flexible than ground forces an attack can be aborted more easily than with ground forces. Finally, the US has a monopoly on airpower--it has become the tool of choice in the post-Cold War strategic environment.<sup>78</sup>

Interestingly, the duration and cost of each conflict have similar characteristics too. Both represent limited concerns for the US and as such will not warrant mandated compliance. According to the historian, Larry Cable, “Coercion is defined only by the

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<sup>75</sup> Col Robert Owen, “The Balkans Air Campaign Study: Part II,” *Airpower Journal* (Fall 1997): 9.

<sup>76</sup> Daniel Goure and Christopher M. Szara, eds., *Air and Space Power in the New Millennium* (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1997), vii. Saxby Chambliss quote.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 111.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., xxix. General Fogleman quote.

recipient and never by the inflicter.”<sup>79</sup> The limited nature of the conflicts allows Saddam and Milosevic to determine when and how the conflicts will end.

Perhaps the most interesting similarity is the fact that while airpower has been successful in achieving its tactical and operational objectives, the strategic end state has not been achieved in either region. Kuwaiti sovereignty has been restored, Bosnia-Herzegovina is territorially intact, and an agreement was reached in Kosovo, yet both conflicts continue. Why? Possible explanations concerning this phenomenon will be discussed in chapter 4.

Summarizing, there are six similarities between Iraqi and Balkan situations: 1) the choice to use force as a means of diplomatic coercion; 2) airpower as the preferred coercive tool; 3) the contribution of risk assessment in the decision for airpower in both situations; 4) the desire to minimize collateral damage in each situation; 5) the role of enemy leadership in the determination of the duration and costs of peace operations; and 6) the strategic end state has not been achieved in either peace operation.

### **End State Comparisons**

To date UN/US policy has failed to achieve a “politically acceptable” end state that translates into “regional stability” and US “predominance” in either region. To review, this study contends that according to UN resolutions, peace operations in the Iraqi AO should terminate when all known WMD and production capabilities have been destroyed. Likewise, in the Balkans, peace operations should conclude when Croatia,

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<sup>79</sup> Larry Cable, “Getting Found in the Fog,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* Vol 7, No. 1 (Spring 1996): 184.

Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Serbia exist peacefully without the requirement for outside intervention.

There appear to be two similarities between the end states of each case study. Both end states require sacrifice on the part of the belligerents. Iraq must sacrifice its sovereignty through the surrender of its right to WMD and their production while the Serbs must sacrifice claims to territory outside Serbia, agree to co-govern Bosnia Herzegovina with the Muslims and Croats, and stop aggression in Kosovo.<sup>80</sup>

Additionally, the purpose behind both end states is peace through regional stability. Iraq must surrender its WMD and its capability to produce them so that it cannot threaten the region with their use, yet it must remain strong enough conventionally to defend itself against potential aggression from Iran. In the Balkans, Serbian military power must be balanced with Croatian and Bosnian capabilities either through the reduction of Serbia's capability or the development of Croatia's and Bosnia's. In both regions a balance of relative combat power is viewed as stabilizing.

The most apparent difference between the end states is the objective nature of the Iraqi end state and the subjective nature of the Bosnian end state. The end state will be realized in the Iraqi situation when a task is completed satisfactorily - the elimination of known WMD, and in the Bosnian situation when a state of existence is achieved--peace.

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<sup>80</sup> "History of the Joint Task Force-Southwest Asia," Vol. I *Narrative* (Jan 1994), 1-2; "UN Security Council Resolution 1160 and 1199," 23 Sept 1998, n.p.; on line, Internet, 31 Mar 1999, available from <http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eur>.

## Coercive Air Strategy Comparison

In both Iraq and the Balkans airpower has been the force of choice because of its desirable traits of speed, flexibility, range, and precision.<sup>81</sup> The major difference between the two air strategies employed in Iraq and Bosnia is the nature of the targets and the weapons selected to effect the targets. The Iraqi target set and theater of operations enables the employment of non-precision weapons, while the use of non-precision weapons in mass is limited in the Bosnian theater of operations.<sup>82</sup> Air operations in the Iraqi AO are projected against a single enemy and each bomb communicates its message to a single recipient. Every bomb that falls in the Bosnian AO communicates a message to the different participants and each perception may differ - targets must be chosen from three points of view instead of one.<sup>83</sup>

The similarities of the two air strategies are easier to identify than their differences. Both strategies have been geared towards “punishing” the enemy for undesirable behavior by striking those targets that will make further non-compliance costly. Air strategies in both situations could be labeled counter-force, denial strategies, conducted as punishment. Iraqi targets have consisted of the Republican Guard, WMD storage and production sites, command and control nodes, and those military forces that stand in the way of these operations. Targets in Bosnia have consisted of weapons storage and marshaling areas, enemy airfields/aircraft, enemy heavy weapons, and critical

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<sup>81</sup> Daniel Goure and Christopher M. Szara, eds., *Air and Space Power in the New Millennium* (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1997), xxix. Gen Fogelman quote.

<sup>82</sup> Col Robert Owen, “The Balkans Air Campaign Study: Part II,” *Airpower Journal* (Fall 1997): 12.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 9.

command/communication nodes in the AO. In neither situation have strikes targeted the populations directly. Both populations are viewed as critical to the ultimate success of peace operations and airpower has been used to influence the people through passive, non-violent “psychological and humanitarian” means as opposed to Douhetian warfare against the civilian population.<sup>84</sup> The strict limitation of minimizing civilian casualties in keeping with the peaceful objectives is a major consideration for both strategies. Additionally, the employment of the same assets based upon the same training and doctrine contribute to the similarities in strategies.

The similarities between the two strategies could be due to three causes, 1) adversaries are unable to overcome the US technology and training gap, so any US air action is successful; 2) employment of airpower has become “standard” for a given threats and missions; or 3) the US is just good at employing airpower. The first two reasons are cause for concern for the future of US airpower. The third if true, is only relevant today and has no bearing on the future success of US airpower.

### Air Objective Comparison

The air objectives for the UN/coalition/US air forces in the Balkan and Iraqi AO’s are virtually identical. The single difference is the CAS requirement in the Bosnian AO.<sup>85</sup> Air strategy in both AO’s have had these objectives: 1) deny flight of hostile aircraft inside exclusion zones; 2) to raise the costs of non-compliance to levels resulting

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<sup>84</sup> Frances M. Doyle, “Named Military Operations: US Military Operations from Jan 89 to Dec 93,” *Armed Forces and Society* Vol. 23 (Rutgers University, Winter 1996), 286.

<sup>85</sup> Col Robert Owen, “The Balkans Air Campaign Study: Part I, *Airpower Journal* (Summer 1997): 12.

in compliance; 3) to demonstrate resolve; and 4) to accomplish the first four objectives without any friendly aircraft losses.<sup>86</sup>

### **Execution Comparison**

Peace operations in Iraq and the Balkans are in their eighth and sixth respective years. UN/Coalition/NATO/US air strategy has been developed in both contingencies to accomplish UN objectives. The resultant courses of action have been to deny flight of enemy aircraft outside of prescribed boundaries and to punish non-compliant behavior. These air strategies have been characterized by airborne monitoring of military activity and intelligence collection, coupled with punitive strikes against key targets perceived to be of significant value to the enemy's power base. Counter-air missions and strategic attack missions comprise the bulk of air operations designed to raise the costs of non-compliance with UN resolutions to levels resulting in compliance.<sup>87</sup>

In support of both UN peace operations coalition aircraft have been tasked with the following missions: 1) deny the enemy the ability to conduct offensive air operations; 2) be in a position to punish non-compliant behavior; and 3) provide a show of force in the region to communicate resolve and commitment in enforcing UN mandates.<sup>88</sup> To

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<sup>86</sup> Synthesized from several sources: Col Robert Owen, "The Balkans Air Campaign Study: Part I," *Airpower Journal* (Summer 1997): 9; 18. Col Robert Owen, "The Balkans Air Campaign Study: Part II," *Airpower Journal* (Fall 1997): 13. Julie Bird, "Other Operations re Still Critical," *Air Force Times* (Oct 24 1994): 17. "Fact Sheet: US and NATO Objectives and Interests in Kosovo," 26 Mar 1999, n.p.; on line, Internet, 31 Mar 1999, available from <http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eur>.

<sup>87</sup> "NATO Air Strikes Target Serbian Infrastructure," *Aviation Week and Space Technology* (11 Sept 1995), 27-28. Steven L. Myers, "Early Attacks Focus on Web of Air Defenses," *New York Times* (25 March 1999): A1.

<sup>88</sup> "NATO Attacks Serbs to Prevent Killings," (US Air Forces in Europe News Service: 24 March 1999): 1.

accomplish the first task, “no-fly” zones were established in each AO to prevent the enemy from conducting offensive air operations inside the exclusion zones.<sup>89</sup> In both theaters air and space assets provide monitoring and coverage of the no-fly zones and ground activity. To accomplish the second task, combat operations have been conducted to “punish and coerce” enemies for non-compliance with UN resolutions.<sup>90</sup>

Accurate intelligence and its interpretation is a priority in both operations and will provide the information that will determine the costs associated with alternative courses of action. Intelligence estimates also form the basis for a determination on end state progress. Air and space assets contribute critical reconnaissance capability essential to decision makers in both AO’s. Up to this point ISR information and enemy behavior confirm that neither situation is stable or in compliance with UN mandates.

In order to execute the outlined air strategies the US required UN/Coalition/NATO, international, and domestic support.<sup>91</sup> These elements have provided the authority and legitimacy that were/are crucial to the success of these peace operations. Coalition support provides air bases in the theater which are necessary for long term operations. International support through the UN provides legitimacy to execute the air strategies and domestic support is required to send forces to conduct the operations.

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<sup>89</sup> “Iraq relations since end of gulf war,” *Air Force Times* (December 28, 1998): 4. “US Military Operations from Jan 89 to Dec 93,” *Armed Forces and Society* Vol. 23, (Rutgers University, Winter 1996): 286.

<sup>90</sup> “NATO Attacks Serbs to Prevent Killings,” (US Air Forces in Europe News Service: 24 March 1999), 1.

<sup>91</sup> National Security Strategy (1998), 2.

## Pertinent commonalties

Having compared the post cold war air strategies of peace operations in Iraq and Bosnia three pertinent commonalties become evident: 1) airpower has been the coercive force of choice in both situations; 2) the air strategies, objectives and execution have been virtually identical in both scenarios; and 3) airpower has achieved success in coercing a temporary change of behavior but has been unable to achieve the political end state in either situation. Why do these commonalties exist?

First, why has airpower been the coercive force of choice for both peace operations? Faced with the problems of a non-compliant Iraq and territorial war in the Balkans under the constraint of action and the restraint of low risk, airpower provided a means of force application that best fit the necessary requirements. Diplomats desired a quick tool to punish non-compliance with little to no risk to friendly forces. Additionally, US policymakers have an airpower option unavailable to many other countries and choose to try it first.<sup>92</sup> Deploying ground troops exposes US soldiers for extended periods of time without a guarantee of success. Choosing between two alternatives, neither guaranteed to succeed, the choice is based upon risk. In situations where the US is not under direct attack, airpower will be the first choice for “diplomatic coercive” force.

Why have the air strategies been virtually identical in both scenarios? Because the air objectives have been virtually identical.<sup>93</sup> Tools are primarily used for the same tasks

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<sup>92</sup> Daniel Goure and Christopher M. Szara, eds., *Air and Space Power in the New Millennium* (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1997), xiv.

<sup>93</sup> Synthesized from several sources: Col Robert Owen, “The Balkans Air Campaign Study: Part I,” *Airpower Journal* (Summer 1997): 9; 18. Col Robert Owen, “The Balkans Air Campaign Study: Part II,” *Airpower Journal* (Fall 1997): 13. Julie Bird, “Other Operations re Still Critical,” *Air Force Times* (Oct 24 1994): 17.

in the same manner. Diplomats have a toolbox full of options and upon seeing a problem that resembles a past problem which was solved with a particular tool, in a particular fashion the Diplomat is likely to apply that tool in the same fashion in the new situation. Additionally, the employment of the same assets based upon the same training and doctrine against similar threats create capabilities that restrain strategy options. This tendency and factors limiting capabilities drive air strategies toward common development and execution.

Perhaps the most pertinent commonality between the two separate peace operations is that while airpower has achieved tactical and operational success in coercing a temporary change of behavior, airpower alone has been unable to achieve the political end state in either situation. Airpower coerced Iraq to allow continued inspections for WMD for a period of time, stopped fighting, and ushered leaders to the bargaining table in the Balkans. Tactically, operationally, and diplomatically effective, yet still short of the desired political end state. This commonality highlights an important aspect in limited force application. In MOOTW, force is limited and should not be expected to accomplish more than limited aims.

But this raises an interesting conundrum. If force is used to coerce, or punish, or deny, and airpower is the instrument of choice, but it has thus far failed to accomplish the desired end-state in either Iraq or the Balkans, then why do we still revert to airpower? It is “efficient” but apparently less than fully “effective.” The two are not synonymous.

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“Fact Sheet: US and NATO Objectives and Interests in Kosovo,” 26 Mar 1999, n.p.; on line, Internet, 31 Mar 1999, available from <http://www.state.gov/www/regions/eur>.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Lessons Learned**

*The time always comes in battle when the decisions of statesmen and of generals can no longer effect the issue and when it is not within the power of our national wealth to change the balance decisively. Victory is never achieved prior to that point; it can be won only after the battle has been delivered into the hands of men who move in imminent danger of death.*

—S.L.A. Marshall

This paper has examined coercive air strategy in Iraq and the Balkans from February of 1991 to April of 1999. While the two situations are different in many important aspects and these differences must be understood and appreciated, they may be carefully compared in search of “truths” concerning the application of coercive airpower in peace operations. What are the true “lessons” of this analysis?

### **End State Considerations**

*Before one takes the first step, one must consider the last.*

—Clausewitz

The situations in Iraq and the Balkans are not examples of failure in peace operations. Rather, they are examples of what coercive airpower can and cannot do in peace operations. To establish a lasting state of peace in regions that are historically violent will take time. How long? That is dependent on how long lasting the peace imposed is desired to last. This is the point Clausewitz tried to make, what will it take in

terms of time, effort, and cost to achieve the designated end state? What is really required in terms of time, effort, and cost to establish a peace that lasts without intervention for fifty years or for that matter five? We do not know the answer to these questions and we must accept/understand that conducting peace operations with end states that require stability and peaceful co-existence could take generations before a true stable, peaceful coexistence is established. If the decision is made to conduct peace operations in an attempt to establish a lasting peace and stable environment then the time involved in the operation should not be a measure of success or failure. An air operation of this nature should be expected to take an undetermined amount of time and should be initiated fully understanding this.

The steps in between the first and last must be accounted for if one considers the last step before taking the first. In determining the costs of achieving the desired end state the conditions required to achieve this climate must be considered. In the case of Iraq the desired climate is an Iraq that is capable of defending itself yet does not possess WMD or the capability to produce WMD. This climate can only be realized through an Iraqi decision to relinquish its WMD assets. What are the conditions necessary to achieve this climate?

Eight years of the air strategy analyzed in this thesis have not coerced Iraq into accepting a defensive posture without nuclear, biological, or chemical (NBC) capabilities. In the Balkans case, the desired climate is a peaceful Balkan region comprised of the recognized independent nations. What are the conditions necessary to achieve this climate?

The government and the people of the Balkan states must decide to live without fighting over territorial, cultural, governmental, or religious issues. Years of peace operations have yet to establish these conditions. Is it realistic to expect that accurate costs for peace operation air strategies can be estimated when the enemy always determines when the end state is achieved? When and how Iraq and the Balkans comply with demands determine each operation's cost. If those nations conducting peace operations desire to achieve their desired end state then the peace operation must be funded with a "blank check," otherwise they must be willing to exit prior to achieving their objectives when further involvement becomes too expensive. An estimate of the costs, including time to establish the conditions necessary to achieve the desired climate must be a part of end state determination.

Once a realistic estimate of the costs has been conducted then the funding requirements must be determined. What assets are necessary to support the prospective peace operation? This element of end state determination should consider monetary costs, international/domestic support, and costs to aircrew proficiency and airframe wear. Attempting to accomplish feats that are beyond the nation's calculated means is not prudent.

The end state lesson learned from the Iraqi and Balkan case studies is that a realistic evaluation of affordable, measurable end states must be conducted. That an estimation of the feasibility of an operation must be based upon this appraisal and that a decision on an affordable end state be the product of this process. The end state must be inside "budget" constraints--monetarily, militarily, internationally, and domestically affordable. In considering airpower's contribution to peace operations along these lines, an end state of

peaceful coexistence and stability may realistically take longer than feasible and cost too much. In this case, the end state could be changed to fit within the “budget” or not be undertaken at all. If an end state of this nature is deemed affordable and pursued it must be understood that the enemy will determine the duration of the operation and that it may take a long period to achieve even with the perfect air strategy.

### **Strategy Considerations**

In thinking of the future and possible applications of airpower in peace operations, the analysis of the Iraqi and Balkan conflicts reaffirm tenets of coercive air strategy. To coerce a change of behavior valued assets must be threatened, neutralized, seized, or destroyed.<sup>94</sup> In both cases behavior changed temporarily in response to coercive applications of airpower that threatened, neutralized, seized, or destroyed valued assets.

First, to threaten, neutralize, seize, or destroy valued assets, these assets must be correctly identified. In Iraq, Saddam’s power base has been identified as a valuable asset. Some of the elements of that power base are WMD, the Republican Guard, and his domestic image. All these have been targeted in the Iraqi peace operations. In the Balkans the items of value to the warring parties have been identified as territory, heavy weapons, air assets, and political power. All have been targeted in the Balkan air strategy. The elements involved in correctly identifying and effecting valued assets are as critical to the success of coercive airpower as any other element of the operation. A keen understanding of cultures and their individual leaders is necessary to avoid mirror

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<sup>94</sup> Robert Pape, *Bombing to Win: Airpower and Coercion in War* (Cornell University Press, 1996), 12.

imaging.<sup>95</sup> Emphasis should be placed upon an in-depth officer education program covering the cultures and individual leaders of potentially aggressive nations to better identify valuable entities.

Second, future air operations are likely to be conducted as a coalition. Both Iraqi and Balkan peace operations are coalition based. More emphasis on exercises and interoperation between international partners should take place. Classification requirements hindering this interface need to be altered thus enabling coalition partners to exercise in a realistic environment. Air strategists must consider the integration of coalition air forces into the plan and the perceptions of the roles and missions each nation plays.

The case studies emphasize the importance of effective command and control structures and simple/clear rules of engagement (ROE). Air strategy should include the command and control structure and prescribe detailed, simple, clear ROE. A great air strategy lacking effective command and control may never be executed or may be executed inappropriately due to an ineffective command and control system like the “dual key” system in the early Balkan peace operations.<sup>96</sup> Additionally, ROE must enable operators to do accomplish their mission in unambiguous terms. The ROE must result in the desired effects to include the perceptions of the operators and their targets.

In developing an air strategy for peace operations care must be taken in choosing an appropriate measure to assess the effectiveness of the strategy.<sup>97</sup> Dominant indicators

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<sup>95</sup> Mirror imaging - Conceptualizing perceptions or reactions of others based upon one's own cognition.

<sup>96</sup> Col Robert Owen, “The Balkans Air Campaign Study: Part I,” *Airpower Journal* (Summer 1997): 15-21.

<sup>97</sup> Scott S. Gartner, *Strategic Assessment in War* (Yale University Press, 1997), 2.

in air strategies may be selected to measure tactical and operational results and not strategic end state progress. As seen in the case study, there is not a dominant indicator in the Iraqi peace operation. The air strategy in Iraq has followed an “inspect; no bomb; not inspect; bomb” script for eight years. How will the UN know that Iraq no longer possess WMD or production capabilities? Some thought should be given to how to measure Iraq’s propensity to possess and produce WMD, meaning--where is Saddam Hussein in his thoughts on Iraqi WMD? Perhaps a dominant indicator in Iraq could be the number of scientists employed or fissionable materials bought or acquired. Regardless, thought on a measure and assessment should be part of any coercive air strategy.

Determining the appropriate assets to employ in peace operations is another lesson learned from the case studies for coercive air strategy. Specifically, the use of TLAMs and the perception by some nations that this represented escalation of hostilities, when the missiles use is perceived as a low risk strategic strike capability from the US viewpoint--the Balkans.<sup>98</sup> The message that the employment of high tech US airpower in international peace operations sends to the world must be considered when structuring a peace operation force and weaponeering against the target list. Possessing and employing weapons platforms in peace operations that are unique to the US may be interpreted in an unintentional manner. One such perception is that of a US autonomous operation regardless of the coalition signatories.

Considering the time given to achieve the desired effects is important in developing peace operation air strategy. This was evidenced in Deliberate Force when

warriors perceived a requirement to rush operations to accomplish objectives prior to a diplomatic cessation of hostilities and diplomats desired to slow the pace of operations to provide leverage over a longer period of time.<sup>99</sup> The duration of force application is a necessary element of peace operation air strategy. The intensity of operations must not exhaust the assets in-theater resulting in an operation of high intensity and short duration if this was not intended. One of the lessons from Iraqi peace operations is the programmed expectation of the Iraqis that air strikes will be of short duration.<sup>100</sup> Having lived through numerous short air campaigns the Iraqis expect they can continue to endure strikes of this nature. Alternatively, a small force operating in theater at a sustainable continuous pace might communicate a more unpleasant existence for the recipients of this continuous pressure resulting in a greater willingness to comply with resolutions.<sup>101</sup>

A major recurring theme in the Iraqi and Balkan case studies is that of risk. Primary objectives in both theaters have been to minimize the loss of friendly assets. This is not unusual to any campaign; still, in peace operations, it is more pronounced due to their limited nature. Limitations on the application of force are extremely important in determining if force applied within the prescribed limitations can achieve its objectives resulting in the desired effects. Mark Clodfelter labeled goals achievable only by the limiting of military force “negative objectives” which apply to this aspect of peace

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<sup>98</sup> Col Robert Owen, “The Balkans Air Campaign Study: Part I,” *Airpower Journal* (Summer 1997): 12.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>100</sup> “Iraq Relations since the Gulf War,” *Air Force Times* (December 28, 1998): 4.

<sup>101</sup> George Kramlinger, Sustained Coercive Air Presence (SCAP): Provide Comfort, Deny Flight and the Future of Airpower in Peace Enforcement (Maxwell AFB, AL: SAAS Thesis, 1996), 77.

operation air strategy.<sup>102</sup> Risk should be minimized but if limits on force preclude accomplishment of the objectives either the limits must be relaxed or the objectives changed.

There is big difference between the terrain and weather in Southwest Asia and the Balkans. Air strategy is dependent on terrain and weather. The number of sorties allocated against a target, the intensity of operations, the duration of the campaign, and the types of platforms and weapons employed will be effected by the terrain and the weather. The timing of operations will be a factor in regions that experience fluctuations in weather according to the season. These considerations may require additional staff planners in regions where terrain and weather are influencers of air operations.

Finally, the case studies point out the importance of viewing the air strategy from other points of view. The perception of operations from the coercer's standpoint is the most important factor of a coercive air strategy. In peace operations the perceptions of the air strategy from the international and domestic points of view are important especially due to the long duration of peace operations. International and domestic support are requirements for peace operations and in the case of Iraq and the Balkans these operations have lasted since the early nineties. Air strategies in peace operations that do not consider alternative points of view may not endure the historically long road to end state achievement.

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<sup>102</sup> Mark Clodfelter, *The Limits of Airpower: The Bombing of North Vietnam* (The Free Press, 1989), xi.

## **Objective Considerations**

Airpower objectives must be relevant to the strategic end state. Studying the coercive air strategy in Iraq and the Balkans from the macro perspective illustrates how the air objectives can be met yet the end state still be in question. This observation emphasizes the relevancy of the air objectives to the strategic end state. Does the establishment of no-fly zones, higher costs of non-compliance, demonstrated resolve, and minimal coalition aircraft losses convince Iraq not to possess WMD, or the Balkan nations to peacefully coexist? Evidently not; however, the air objectives should be designed to accomplish certain desired effects that contribute to achieving the strategic end state. Airpower alone may be unable to establish and keep the peace, but where coercive airpower is employed with this intent, the objectives of the air strategy must be continuously reviewed to ensure they are producing effects that promote a climate conducive to end state realization.

## **Targeting Considerations**

The notion of targeting seems contradictory to peace operations. If targeting is taking place then peace is being imposed through force.<sup>103</sup> The academic distinction between peace keeping and peace enforcement is simple, yet operations that start in peace keeping seem to involve some level of peace imposition and peace enforcement--peace operation strategists must be concerned with targeting. The targeting lessons for air strategists from the case studies are: 1) collateral damage and casualties must be kept to a

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<sup>103</sup> Larry Cable, “Getting Found in the Fog,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* Vol 7, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 97.

minimum; 2) targets should be selected on the basis of value to the targeted party and must consider vulnerability; and 3) most importantly the perceptions of and reactions to targeting and weaponeering must be considered from all standpoints. One of the primary reasons airpower is the coercive force of choice is its unique ability to fulfill all these targeting requirements.

### **Summary**

A brief summary of the lessons learned from the case studies highlights the following attributes of airpower in peace operations: 1) airpower is highly effective in achieving tactical and operational objectives; 2) airpower represents the lowest risk force application method; and 3) airpower technology, training, and experience drive common air tactics and strategy in different situations.

### **Implications**

What are the implications of the Iraqi and Bosnian case studies for future peace operation air strategists? The low risk tactical and operational successes in Iraq and the Balkans will result in Airpower's use in future peace operations. Air strategies and objectives will be similar to past peace operations. This implication comes with a warning: technology, training, and experience must not hamper creative airpower application in each new challenge. Airpower's ability to achieve low risk tactical and operational objectives does not equate to ultimate success in peace operations--this must be understood.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusion**

*Success in war is determined by the political advantages gained, not in victorious battles.*

—Niccolo Machiavelli

Since the end of the Cold War, the US has won many military victories in Iraq and the Balkans, but political victory is still beyond our grasp. Despite its tactical and operational success in coercing temporary changes of behavior, airpower has been unable to single-handedly achieve the political end state in either situation. It appears that air strikes of limited duration cannot drive the costs of non-compliance to intolerable levels resulting in compliance, that political and domestic concerns limiting force are understood by the targets of coercive measures, and that violent means that stop short of mandating compliance encourage defiance—the case in both Iraq and the Balkans.

Airpower's ability to coerce compliance is defined by Iraq and Serbia, not the UN/NATO or the US. Airpower cannot mandate compliance, both Iraq and Serbia have endured the most the US is willing to offer and both have survived to live and fight another day. The inability of airpower to mandate compliance is not an aberration. Debate continues over airpower's contribution to the Japanese surrender in WW II. According to the literature there is only one recorded instance of successful compliance resulting solely from air strikes. The island of Pantelleria surrendered in WW II as a

consequence of strategic bombardment.<sup>104</sup> Airpower can decimate an opponent, provide tactical and strategic information, and support ground forces in mandating compliance or surrender, but it cannot unilaterally force compliance or surrender in the limited context of peace operations. Airpower may destroy the infrastructure of a society, yet people have continued to resist in the past and will continue to resist in the future.

Herein lies the major weakness of the strategy in post-Desert Storm peace operations. US strategy calls for air strikes to punish Iraq and Serbia for non-compliance and both know they can withstand US air strikes. Additionally, Iraq and Serbia know that the US is limited by international and domestic opinion in its use of force. The primary restraint on US military employment is internal, not external.<sup>105</sup> This knowledge contributes to Iraqi and Serbian confidence that air strikes will be limited in scope and duration. Saddam and Milosevic value their ability to withstand US air attacks more than they do the assets destroyed by coercive attacks. Policy makers and strategists must understand this and re-evaluate future means of coercion regarding airpower's inherent limitations.<sup>106</sup>

Peace operations conducted in these theaters provide valuable lessons for the future use of airpower to monitor and punish a belligerent in an attempt to coerce a determined opponent to comply with demands. Airpower's flexibility, range, speed, and autonomy provide capabilities well suited to peace operations. However, these same

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<sup>104</sup> Philip Smith, Bombing to Surrender: The Contribution of Airpower to the Collapse of Italy 1943 (Maxwell AFB, AL: SAAS Thesis, 1997), 24.

<sup>105</sup> Jeffrey Record, Hollow Victory: A Contrary View of the Gulf War (Brassey's, 1993), 148.

<sup>106</sup> Eliot A. Cohen, "The Mystique of US Air Power," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 74, no 1 (Jan/Feb 1994): 124.

characteristics result in airpower being used in virtually every situation as a cheap, quick response to difficult situations involving conflict.

US policy-makers must understand the limits of airpower. First, using military means to coerce behavior while limiting the extent of coercive efforts is tenuous at best. As shown, airpower has been successful in achieving positive objectives such as enforcing a “line in the sand” or denying flight for example. Second, accurate intelligence and an understanding of the situation is paramount to peace operations because of their purpose. Peace operations for the most part are conducted to stop violence and/or reduce the potential for its future use. Force used within these boundaries must be judicious and result in the desired effect. Accurate intelligence is paramount, force application based upon faulty intelligence or an incomplete or inaccurate understanding of the situation has been futile as illustrated in Vietnam and Iraq. Eliminating Iraqi WMD capability requires knowledge concerning their exact locations and confirmation of elimination. Without this capability how will the UN know when it has achieved its operational objective?

Airpower punishment strategies may be necessary to communicate a successful denial campaign. An opponent may not realize further resistance is futile until he can no longer avoid punishment strikes. Still, the cost of compliance to a determined foe is not attainable through airpower alone. Last, the initiation of violence as means of coercion is futile if the initiator imposes limits on the level of violence it is willing to prosecute in pursuit of its aims and the coercee understands this limitation. In Iraq and Serbia it is understood that the US will not invade and occupy either country. It is therefore in both interests to resist indefinitely knowing the US will not continue its limited punishment

strategy indefinitely. If Saddam and Milosevic can outlast the US they win and the US loses; to continue limited air strikes in hope of Iraqi and Serbian compliance is futile.

Finally, peace operations in the Iraqi and Balkan theaters of operations have been ongoing since the end of the Cold War. Political, domestic, and international concerns all weigh heavily in strategic decisions outlining US coercive air strategy. In both AOs coalition air forces have enforced no-fly zones and conducted punitive air strikes in attempts to minimize air attacks on dissidents and to “manage” aggression. To date the enforcement of no-fly zones have been successful while denial/punishment strategies have failed to force compliance. If the US, UN, NATO, and world expect compliance then continuous, indefinite air attack, ground force action, or a combination of air and ground attack may be required. If designers of future peace operations are not willing to incur the costs associated with these courses of action then they cannot expect future belligerents to comply. As Theodore Roosevelt once remarked, “Diplomacy is utterly useless where there is no force behind it.” The force behind successful peace operations must be more than efficient—it must be effective.

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